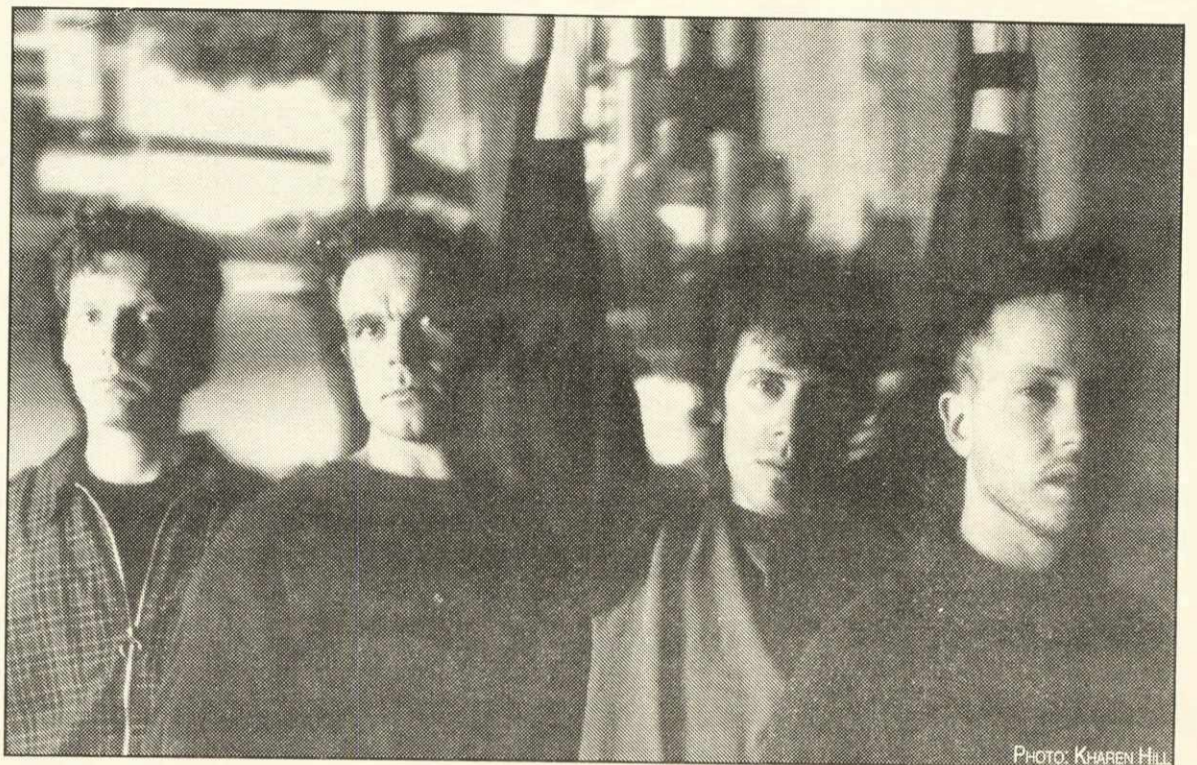


Talking to Odd



Odds (L-R) Doug Elliott, Pat Stewart (the guy who got stuck talking to Judy), Craig Northey and Steven Drake

by Judy Reid

I don't know if I should be allowed to interview a band when all I know of them is a video I saw almost two years ago. But the one song I did hear was fantastic and if there can be such a thing as a one-hit-wonder, then there's room for a one-song-slave. The song is "Heterosexual Man." The video was made with a couple of the Kids in the Hall, and the band is the Odds.

Interview/Review
Odds
Warner

If your Odds' experience is limited, you will have an opportunity to broaden it with 8,500 other people when the band opens for the Tragically Hip on February 2 at the Halifax Metro Centre.

Tuesday night I interviewed Pat Stewart, drummer and newest member of the band. So new in fact that ex-Odds man Paul Brennan was the drummer for four tracks of their latest release *good weird feeling*.

"He took off and I took in," said Stewart with a laugh.

Singer/guitarists Steven Drake and Craig Northey with Doug Elliott on bass and backing vocals round off this four-piece rock group from Vancouver. *Good weird feeling* is their third release following *Bedbugs* (1993), and *Neopolitan* (1991). Although Stewart is new to the band, he is quite familiar with the Odds' music and in fact turned down an offer to join the band when it first formed in 1987.

"It was more of an adjustment for them," said Stewart, "because for me, we already knew each other and there was a mutual respect and I've always been a fan of the music."

My crash course in Odds' 101 has shown me that they are a band worth pursuing. *Good weird feeling* not only has lyrics that can keep you up at night in puzzlement, wonder and laughter, but a variety of instrumental sounds that range in style from driving guitar riffs, to

sparse and barely—there melodies, to downright mellow background noise.

"Come and listen to us," was Stewart's response when asked to describe the Odds' sound. "I mean how do you describe it? It's melodic, it's got soul, it's got a lot of groove and rhythm."

The Odds' latest cd has much to offer, and although it is going to take a few hearings to absorb it all, some tracks already stand out in my mind including the stirring first release, "Truth Untold." "Radios of Heaven" is an upbeat tune about the joys of a good radio station in the Great Beyond and the rhythmic "Break the Bed," one of Stewart's favourite songs, has been described as a "hormonal honker."

"That was the first song we did as the newest incarnation of the band," said Stewart about "Break the Bed."

"Steven just said, 'Well, I got this thing and it kind of goes like this.' And then: 'I hear the drums, I don't know, something like this.' So I worked on that and Craig came up with this other thing on guitar. So it was real creative."

One of my favourite songs, "The Last Drink" is simultaneously the funniest and saddest of the lot:

"Carrying your ashes from bar to bar/I'm in a mess and you're in a mason

jar... You were never big on conversation and that hasn't changed since your cremation... And if you're afraid of getting hurt you suffer more ills/like the hypochondriac who dies choking on his pills."

Stewart has played in Halifax before but never with the Odds who performed here as opening acts for Barney Bentall and the Legendary Hearts as well as ginger.

Among the bands listed as "Bands with helping hands" in their cd booklet are the Barenaked Ladies, Spirit of the West and the Tragically Hip.

"The Tragically Hip have been great to us," said Stewart, "especially because they called us [to go on tour]."

If you can't wait until February 2 to see the Odds, they will be doing a live interview on MuchMusic at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, January 28. You can also hear them on CBC Morningside with Peter Gzowski 11 a.m. Monday, January 30.

However if you aren't among the lucky 8,500 who will see them in concert, the Odds' *good weird feeling* — if perhaps not quite as exciting as live entertainment — will make for a wonderful substitute.

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